DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 440 416 CS 510 299

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TITLE	Media Literacy.
ISBN	ISBN-0-7619-0925-7
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	406p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Sage Publications, Inc., 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320 ($61.50). Tel: 805-499-0721; e-mail: order@sagepub.com; Web site: http://www.sagepub.com.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Advertising; Audience Awareness; Class Activities; Higher Education; *Mass Media; *Mass Media Effects; *Mass Media Role
IDENTIFIERS	*Media Literacy

ABSTRACT

Written to appeal to a general audience that wants to think more deeply about the nature of the media, their messages, and their effects on both individuals and society, this book serves as a broad introduction to the thinking that ties educators together in the common goal of educating a media literate generation. It is written from a critical perspective. The arguments in the book are grounded in scientific research; and it presents guidance and practical exercises to help readers develop their own skills for dealing with media messages. The book attempts to keep the focus more on knowledge structures than on individual facts so that readers can get a sense of "the big picture" of the media. Each chapter begins with an outline and thesis statement and includes at least one exercise students can do at home or do in class as a stimulus to group discussions. Most chapters contain a short annotated bibliography. Chapters in the book are: (1) What Is Media Literacy?; (2) The Importance of Media Literacy; (3) How Does the Human Mind Work? (4) The Skills of Media Literacy; (5) The Developmental Perspective; (6) What Is News?; (7) Commercial Advertising; (9) What Is Entertainment?; (9) Development of the Mass Media Industries; (10) Economic Perspective; (11) Who Owns and Controls the Mass Media?; (12) What Is an Audience?; (13) Broadening Our Perspective on Media Effects; (14) HOW Do the Effect Processes Work?; (15) Media Influence on Institutions; (16) The Importance of Real-World Knowledge; (17) The Media Literacy Perspective; and (18) Postscript to Students: Strategies for Increasing Media Literacy. Answers for a media literacy quiz are attached. (RS)

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